LWIA's WORKFORCE STRATEGIC PLAN

Instructions

The Workforce Investment Act (WIA) of 1998, as amended, requires that the governor of each state submit a WIA title I/Wagner-Peyser (W-P) Act State Integrated Workforce Plan to the U.S. Department of Labor (DOL) that outlines a five-year strategy for its workforce investment system. States must have approved State Plans in place to receive formula allotments under WIA or financial assistance under W-P. (WIA Section 112(a), W-P Section 8(a).

In order to develop a compliant State plan, each Local Area is required to submit its own five (5) year Integrated Workforce Plan. Please keep the following information in mind as you develop your plan:

- The new Integrated Workforce Plan Requirements substantially revise and replace the former WIA/Wagner-Peyser "stand-alone" planning guidance;

- The submitted plan should reflect the Local Area's current and planned activities through PY 2016;

- A plan signature page with original signatures of authorized parties is required with plan submission;

- Since ARRA funds expired, ARRA-specific references should be deleted from local plans;

- Local Areas must review WIA legislation and updated regulations to ensure local agreements comply with WIA requirements and applicable local ordinances for such agreements;

- The state is in the process of preparing additional technical assistance and guidance for the completion of local Memoranda of Understanding/Resource Sharing Agreements. Updated attachments are not due at this time. However, current Agreements with signatures must be available upon request and during onsite program reviews;

- Discussion of new local initiatives, especially those with an "economic development" or "business services" focus is required; and

- To promote transparency and accountability and provide a forum for public review and comment, the State encourages Local Areas to post the Local Area's Integrated Workforce plan on-line. If to the Local Area chooses not to post Integrated Plans on-line, the Local Area must implement alternative strategies to meet public review and comment requirements.

Completed plans must be submitted as a single Microsoft Word document with all applicable signature pages, attachments, etc., incorporated. Please forward an electronic copy of Local Area's Integrated

Workforce Plan to rflowers@dllr.state.md.us and an original hard copy, including all signature sheets and attachments via postage paid mail to:

Ronald D. Flowers, Jr.

Statewide One Stop Operations Manager

DLLR, DWDAL

1100 Eutaw Street, 2nd floor

Baltimore, MD 21201

Thank you for your partnership.

Timetable Estimates

Milestone Date	Task/Deliverable
Kick-Off	
April 16	Conference Call/ State Plan Kick Off/ Template Issued
April 16-May 20	Locals Working on Plans

May 21	Local Plans Due (DRAFT)
May 21-May 25	State Reviewing Local Plans
May 28-June 29	LWIA Public Comment
June 29- July 6	LWIAs Finalizing Local Plans
July 6-July 27	State Reviews & Collaboration State & M3L working on plan integration
July 27-August 27	State Public Comment Period
August 27-Sept. 7	State/M3L Review/Edit Comment & Wrap Up
Sept 10	Final Plan submitted to DOL

Plan Signatures

Name of Area: Mid-Maryland Workforce Investment Area

	Ken Ulman	
Chief Local Elected Official Signature	Name	Date
	Francine Trout	
Local Area Director Signature	Name	Date
	Wallace Brown	
LWIA Board Chairperson Signature	Name	Date

Note: Original signatures are not required for submittal, but must be available for review upon request and during onsite program reviews. Please scan signatures for the plan.

GENERAL NARRATIVE (SECTION III)

A. WIA Organization

1.	Name of Area	Mid-Maryland Workforce Investment Area
2.	Name, address, and phone number for Chief Local Elected Official	Ken Ulman, 3430 Courthouse Road, Ellicott City Maryland 21043. PH: 410-313-2020
3.	Name of organization administering the grant	Howard County Office of Workforce Development is the Administrative Entity for Mid-Maryland. We work in partnership with the Carroll County Business and Employment Resource Center
	a. Name, address, and phone number for Local Area Director	Francine Trout, 7161 Columbia Gateway Drive. Ste. D. Columbia, Maryland 21046 410-290-2620
	b. Fax Number:	410-290-2626
	c. Email Address:	ftrout@howardcountymd.gov
4.	Name, address, and organization of the Workforce Investment Board Chairperson	Wallace Brown Quality Assurance Manager Masterworks Machining, Inc. 86 York Street Taneytown, MD 21787
5.	Name, address, and organization of the Youth Council Chairperson	Vacant
6.	Name, address, and phone number of the area's One-Stop operator(s). List all the sites the organization manages and indicate with an asterisk sites that are WIA comprehensive service sites	Francine Trout, 7161 Columbia Gateway Drive, Columbia, MD 21046- PH: 410-290-2620 Sites: * The Columbia Workforce Center, *The Business and Employment Resource Center (One-Stop Operator), * The Laurel Regional Workforce Center
7.	Web site address, Facebook page, You Tube channel, or other social	Websites: http://owd.howardcountymd.gov, www.carrollworks.org,http://www.facebook.com/pages/Columbia-

media for the area (if any)	Workforce-Center/137218236332993

B. TITLE I OPERATIONAL AREAS

1. Collaborative Local Labor Market Plan

> Describe your local economic environment, including areas of significant growth or decline, labor force characteristics and current industry needs. What strategies will be implemented to meet the demands of the local labor market, particularly industries

Mid-Maryland has been impacted by the change in the economy as has the rest of the state. However, Mid-Maryland continues to enjoy a strong economy with consistently lower unemployment rates than most other areas and higher than average salaries. Howard and Carroll counties attract both national and international companies in a variety of industries.

Howard County has over 8400 employers, with approximately 172,000 people in the labor force and a median income of $102,000; Carroll County's employer base is over 4,400 with over 90,404 in the labor force and an approximate median income of $95,825. Over half of Mid-Maryland's workforce commutes outside of the area. Significant numbers of commuters from across the state of Maryland as well as out-of-state workers come into Carroll and Howard counties for employment. Education is highly valued in the Area. The 2011 Maryland Report Card indicates that both counties have a high school graduation rate of approximately 95%. In addition, the report indicates that over 98% of Howard's graduates and 85% of Carroll's graduates have documented a decision to pursue post secondary studies.

The Homeland Security industry growth and demand continues, especially with our proximity to Ft. Meade. Ft. Meade was one of the military installations positively impacted by BRAC. Ft. Meade itself is home to NSA, DISA, and the new Cyber Command along with many, many other tenant agencies. Ft. Meade/NSA supports 125,729 jobs in Maryland earning an estimated $9.2 billion in employee compensation according to DBED. Ft. Meade is one mile from Howard County. In response to this expansion Mid-Maryland is participating in the FeDirect grant. We are offering workshops on the federal application process, intensive case management for individuals interested in BRAC-related employment, and opportunities for training. One of our staff is meeting regularly with BRAC-impacted businesses to identify the specific skills gaps these businesses are facing and provide assistance with the recruitment and retention of their workforce. We plan to continue assisting with the recruitment through providing identified training to meet these skills gaps and referring already training applicants to open positions. Many positions related to the BRAC expansion are in the STEM fields. This directly correlates to the largest projected demand industries in Mid Maryland which are management, business and

financial and professional and related. Two of the largest employers in Mid—Maryland are SAIC and Johns Hopkins Applied Physics lab which are both defense contractors.

Myths continue to exist around requirements for security clearances. To that end, we are scheduling the Ft. Meade Alliance to provide training in the realities of the security clearance process through Project Scope.

We actively participate in the Pathways to CyberSecurity grant. Everyone from the U.S. president, to Senator Barbara Mikulski to the small business person understands there is a need to secure data. The funding for training in this grant allows us to prepare the workforce for jobs both in and out of the federal government. Almost every industry and business needs to be protected from the cyber threat. In some cases, we may braid funding in the CyberSecurity grant with WIA or FeDirect funding to fully develop the participant's skills.

There is projected growth between 2008 and 2018 in all healthcare occupations in Mid-Maryland, according to DLLR statistics.   Three of the 11 top employers in Mid-Maryland are in the healthcare industry; two are hospitals and third is an experienced provider of home health, medical staffing, and wellness services.   In the 4th quarter of 2010 there were 23,859 jobs in the Education and Health Services Industry Division. Of the 5,828,289 residents in Maryland it is estimated that 12.3% are over age 65. As the population is aging the need for healthcare workers is increasing. We support training in the healthcare arena, within the parameters of our funding, and plan to continue to do so as long as the labor market supports it.

Howard and Carroll counties both hold job fairs and recruitment fairs throughout the year to assist businesses with hiring needs and to help job seekers obtain employment. Mid-Maryland will continue to offer these job fairs and specialized recruitments for industries in high growth and high demand areas.

To meet the demands of the local labor market, the business staff works collaboratively with local economic development in addressing the workforce needs of new and expanding companies. A strategy we plan on continuing to use is matching workers who have been identified through Rapid Response activities, or soon to become dislocated workers, and market them to companies who are hiring in the same skill sets. Wagner Peyser staff currently use an email distribution list to inform thousands of job seeker customers of current job opportunities and job acquisition strategies.   New and expanding companies receive customized recruitment activities, customized job fairs, coordination and screening of applications, *regional* networking, and other "on-demand" human resource services. Training

activities are directly related to local labor market demand.   Another approach that may be used is customized training for high-growth, high demand industries. Apprenticeship programs are also a possibility. We have added the use of OJT in Mid-Maryland. Title 1 staff will explore innovative ways to meet the demand of the local labor market and the needs of job seekers and local companies.

Mid- Maryland is partnering with Prince Georges, Montgomery and Anne Arundel WIAs, and DLLR at the Laurel Regional Workforce Center. We expect to hold regional events and training to serve the population in that area. We will partner with the local community colleges as they develop new curriculum to meet the needs of BRAC. Economic Development is the lead agency in business recruitment; therefore we will continue to maintain our active partnership.

> Provide information on significant shifts in the economy that have required new workforce system strategies (e.g., Base Realignment and Closure or targeted regional programs and partnerships).

See question one above

2. Local Area Governance (LWIB)

Describe how the LWIB will coordinate the following Title I activities/functions with local elected officials:

> Developing the local workforce investment plan and conducting oversight of the one-stop system, youth activities and employment and training activities.

Title I staff, who act as representatives of the LEO(s) for this purpose, work directly with the LWIB members in establishing the direction of the WIA, and in the development of the Plan. The board conducts over-sight of the one-stop system including youth activities. The board uses one-stop management and performance reports originated internally and by the state reporting system; labor market information and performance reports; services and performance are discussed and reviewed at every WIB meeting. The board input provides information that leads to changes in strategies of employment and training activities and to higher community inclusiveness. Board members have been involved at the local one-stops not only in observation of one-stop flow and function, but also in volunteering their time by presenting seminars or conducting mock interviews with customers. WIB members have used MWE and the Centers for recruitment activities. Through WIB contacts we have made several presentations in the community about the Centers' services and MWE capabilities, as well as WIA and WP services. For example, we have presented to the school systems, community

college staff and businesses increasing the community's knowledge of our services.   We plan to increase the use of our WIB connections as for opportunities to further inform the community of our service.

Mid-Maryland's Board supports the connection of prospective employees to employers and supports the training requirements and opportunities for workforce improvement.   The flagship of the Mid-Maryland Workforce Investment Board is "One Stop" service delivery. One-Stop services streamline and consolidate services through better collaboration of service partners; empower individuals by providing them training and employment choices; and provide universal access to all.

Selecting one-stop operators with the agreement of the Chief Elected Official.

The One-Stop Operator was selected by agreement between the LWIB and a consortium of three or more partner organizations with the consent of the LEO(s) or their representatives. There is a consortium agreement between Howard and Carroll counties signed by the Chief Elected Officials of both counties.

Selecting eligible youth service providers based on the recommendations of the youth council, and identifying eligible providers of adult and dislocated worker intensive services and training services.

The youth council recommends potential providers of youth services, when applicable or activities to the LWIB.   Title I staff use the respective jurisdictions' procurement policies and procedures for inclusion of the recommended providers in a competitive process, as necessary. At the present time youth may attend training classes via an ITA per the DLLR waiver. Trainings are offered either on the MHEC list of approved training providers or in applicable cases via the waivers in the DLLR WIFI.

Eligible training providers of adult and dislocated worker intensive and training services may be recommended by the LWIB for processing under the established procedures for inclusion on the local provider list.

The Maryland Higher Education Commission list of approved training is used as a source for training programs. Title I staff use the local procurement system in each county to incorporate the LWIB's recommendations.

Developing a budget for the purpose of carrying out the duties of the local board.

The Mid-Maryland LWIB does not have its own operating budget. Day-to-day operational duties are performed by the Title I staff under the board's oversight, and in conjunction with the respective county oversight or supervision. Title I staff also provide administrative support to the board. The budgets, which support staff functions and activities, are developed within the respective Title I County structure and are controlled by the local government system.

Negotiating and reaching agreement on local performance measures.

Negotiating and reaching agreement on local performance measures: Mid-MD LWIB, with concurrence of the LEO's, adopted the State and Governor's negotiated benchmarks as the local performance expectations.

Assisting the Governor in developing the Statewide Employment Statistics System under the Wagner- Peyser Act.

Mid-Maryland supports the Statewide Employment Statistic System under the Wagner-Peyser Act. WP and WIA staff have been working together to help achieve performance outcomes for both funding streams. We have had staff meetings to determine how to best achieve these goals and plan to continue to do so throughout the next several years.

Coordinating workforce investment activities with economic development strategies and developing employer linkage.

Mid- Maryland title I entities participate with local economic development authorities in providing outreach and recruitment events for new or expanding companies. The workforce centers are available for interviews and recruiting potential employees. Some recruitment methods we use are email distribution lists, posts in MWE, fliers in the centers and the community, and social media. For example, in Howard county EDA holds monthly meetings on new prospects that include representation from the WIA, community college, DBED, and DLLR; potential new businesses are discussed and together we develop strategies to assist the business with their workforce development needs.   Another example is the Vice President of EDA and the WIA director work together on the Earning Power Committee of the Board to Promote Self Sufficiency. In Carroll County the local one-stop, the Business and Employment Resource Center (BERC), functions as an agency of the Carroll County Department of Economic Development. Business services are coordinated with Economic Development's retention staff and tracked in a web based database, Executive Pulse.

3. Local Board Staffing

Local areas must carefully structure LWIB staffing to comply with WIA and the State's LIWB staffing polices. Describe the current LWIB staffing plan (WIFI 9-99)

The Mid-Maryland WIB relies on the Title I county government employees for its staff support needs. None of the Title I employees is a hired employee of the LWIB. Each respective county hires employees for workforce functions according to respective policies and procedures, and according to funding availability within each county.

4. Youth Council

Describe how the Youth Council will interact with the LWIB to carry out the following functions outline in the Act:

- Coordinating youth activities in a local area

- Developing portions of the local plan related to eligible youth

- Recommending eligible youth service providers

- Conducting oversight, monitoring and corrective action of the local area's youth programs.

The role of the youth council is to make recommendations to the LWIB, the One-Stop Operators, or the Administrative entity on programming, operational issues, and on issues of community-wide youth service coordination. Our Youth council meets throughout the year to discuss service delivery and activities for youth in the local area.

The Youth Council's recommendations for services are taken into consideration in the development of the local plan. For example, youth may have challenges obtaining meaningful employment. In response to that we are providing subsidized employment opportunities in county government. Youth are expected to dress and act appropriately for the job in which they are being paid. Youth are being held accountable for their actions and learning "soft and hard" skills. We have heard over and over again that the lack of soft skills is a huge issue for youth in the workforce. As part of their training they are learning both.

We currently do not have youth service providers in Mid-Maryland; services are provided by Title 1 staff. In accordance with the Workforce Investment Act, Section 123 and the County procurement procedures services for youth, we plan to enter a formal bidding process. Youth council members will be requested to review the proposals from youth service providers and make recommendations to the LWIB for approval. Organization and financial viability of vendors is verified through the respective county purchasing offices and/or the established pre-award system, the formal bidding process conducting oversight, monitoring and corrective action of the local area's youth plan:

The youth council will review the youth plan at regular intervals via Title 1 staff and monitoring will be handled through the process described in the Monitoring Section. If there are compliance issues corrective action will be taken.

5. One-Stop System for Service Delivery

List the One-Stop Centers in your local area, including address, phone and FAX numbers. Indicate the One-Stop Operator for each site and whether it is a comprehensive or satellite center.

COMPREHENSIVE CENTERS
Columbia Workforce Center
7161 Columbia Gateway Drive, Suite D
Columbia, MD 21046
410-290-2600 ph
410-290-2626 f*ax*
Operator: Howard County Office of Workforce Development

Carroll County Business & Employment Resource Center (BERC)
224 N. Center St.
Westminster, MD 21157-5134
Phone: 410-386-2820 Fax: 410-876-2977
Operator: BERC

The Mid-Maryland WIA is a partner at the Laurel Regional Workforce Center. The Center is located in Prince George's County but includes several local WIAs

Laurel Regional Workforce Center (LRWC)
312 Marshall Avenue, 6th floor
Laurel, Maryland 20707-4824
home: 301-362-9708
Operator: Prince George's Workforce Corporation

SATELLITE OFFICES

Howard Community College

10650 Hickory Ridge Road
Columbia, MD 21044
Telephone: 410-772-4979
Fax: 410-772-4986

> Describe the general operation and delivery of service in your One-Stop Centers. This should include a description of how services are currently provided by each of the required and optional One-Stop partners, and particularly the integration of Wagner-Peyser and WIA services. Also address how services are provided to individuals within the local area that do not have access to a physical One-Stop Center.

Orientations to One-Stop system services are offered on a regular basis to customers seeking employment and/or training information. They are offered using a workshop format and/or on an indiviudal basis, as customer need dictates. These workshops are facilitiated by WIA and/or Wagner Peyser staff. The orientation process provides access to system-wide resources inclusive of partner and community services. Youth have access to all one-stop services and resources. The Maryland Workforce Exchange System with its spidering technology and, use of on-line job-search sites and assessments has fast-forwarded customer services. Comprehensive services to business are provided through business service consultants, business resource representatives and business teams. Collaboration exists among the partners for the enhancement of workforce services, such as, planning, and program development, and delivery.

WIA, Wagner Peyser, DORS and UI are all co-located full-time at the Columbia Workforce Center. There is also part-time representation from Howard Community College. The Title 1 Youth Counselor has offices located at both the CWC and HCC. FeDirect staff is located at the LWRC and the CWC. HCC holds ABE/GED classes at the CWC.

In Carroll County WIA, Wagner Peyser, Unemployment Insurance Appeals, Carroll Community College and Adult Education Program staff are full time at BERC and DORS offers services at BERC part-time.

In an effort to provide the most-customer friendly service possible, job seekers are encouraged to use the MWE system from any location where there is Internet access, including their homes.   If individuals do not have Internet access at home and cannot get to a physical One-Stop Center they are told of other places where there is free public Internet access in the community. The Mid-Maryland area also has many service organizations. Referrals are made to other partners and community organizations that may provide assistance to our customers.

<u>Required Partners</u>

Wagner-Peyser Act Programs are provided in the WIA and offices are co-located.

Service delivery in Mid-Maryland is operationally consolidated using a team approach, primarily consisting of staff members from both WIA funded and Wagner Peyser funded staff programs. All core service functions have been integrated and cross training has been completed in compliance with the law and state personnel regulations. Features of the integrated system include an orientation process highlighting all partner services where group orientations are facilitated by a team consisting of WIA and WP staff; a common resource area; common job search or job related workshops; technology linkage; sharing of information, resources, and staff; joint case management and funding; combined staff meetings, integrated program planning and trouble-shooting; consolidated business team functions, and a unified commitment to the Maryland Workforce Exchange.

Mid-Maryland's Business Service teams work to provide a comprehensive "demand-side" service approach to the business community. Depending on the type of service, a representative of the local community college, Rapid Response, DSS, FeDirect, Cyber or MESP (Green) may also participate. Members of the team attend EDA monthly meetings. The team addresses employer needs, reaching out to high growth/high demand industries, and meet to establish goals, plan outreach and recruitment efforts as well as any other item on the business service menu.

Migrant and Seasonal Farm Worker service programs and Veterans' Programs are further detailed in section "5c".

Maryland's Veterans' Program provides veterans' activities authorized under Chapter 41 of Title 38, United States code. Veterans receive preference in all services as outlined by the law. See Section 6a. (5).

The LVER assumes functional supervisory responsibility for the Veterans' Program as well as community outreach. The DVOP provides career-coaching and case management services to veterans with barriers to employment. Additional services include outreach, individual employment plans and collaboration with and referral to other partner agencies for additional services as needed.

The Department of Rehabilitation Services (DORS) provides vocational rehabilitation services to individuals with severe disabilities that may limit activities of daily living and opportunities for employment. The basic menu of services includes assessments for determining eligibility, priority of service, and vocational rehabilitation needs; vocational counseling and guidance, referral and other necessary services.

DORS also provides vocational and other training services, including personal and vocational adjustment training, and accommodations. Also provided are interpreter services, reader services, rehabilitation teaching services and orientation and mobility services for individuals who are blind.   Job search and placement assistance, job retention services, supported employment and post employment services are available to assist with regaining, maintaining or advancing in employment. As part of the community partnership, DORS is aware of and utilizes other partner services necessary to assure that job seekers with disabilities secure needed services.

Partnerships exist between DORS and WIA staff for joint case management, and funding for occupational training. DORS personnel are co-located part-time and full-time at the various comprehensive centers to facilitate ease of access and more spontaneous involvement in integrated services. BERC will continue to partner with DORS to provide a joint summer youth program, as funding allows.

Family and Children Services of Central Maryland has the Experience Works contract which services older workers. We are currently electronically linked to them. The comprehensive one-stops and other public entities are used as work sites. The Columbia Workforce Center uses individuals participating in work experience to assist with clerical functions, when possible. Cross-referrals are made to relevant partner agencies, including Title I, to obtain services, and to assist in meeting the needs of this target population.

Carroll and Howard Community Colleges administer post-secondary vocational education in Mid-Maryland using a variety of strategies applicable to the funding streams. Occupational training programs leading to immediate employment and fostering greater links between the colleges and the business community are used in the Area. Both community colleges continue to be primary resources for Title I Intensive Services and will continue to be instrumental in the provision of Title I Training Services and services to DORS, DSS customers, and public school students with disabilities.

The provision of Trade Act services is primarily handled by Wagner Peyser staff with collaboration with WIA staff, as needed.

Residents in the Mid-Maryland area access unemployment compensation by phoning the call-in centers or filing on-line. Profiled individuals are required to attend Early Intervention workshops, facilitating referral to other one-stop services early in the individual's unemployment insurance claim. Comprehensive workforce services will be provided to individuals as they establish an unemployment claim, and as implemented by the state UI officials. Mid-Maryland anticipates serving all profiled UI recipients in conjunction with the state's vision for linking claimants to comprehensive one-stop services. Mid-Maryland is compliant with the new EUCREA requirements and will continue to offer services to these individuals.

HUD programming provides limited employment and job readiness services to a specific target group through linkages within the local community, generally though the Community Services Block Grant Act. Counties in the WIA offer the Family Self Sufficiency Program, where eligible customers utilize one-stop services. Once they secure employment a portion of their Section 8 payment is placed in an escrow account for up to 5 years that can be used as a down payment to purchase a home.

The Carroll Community College and Howard Community College provide adult basic education and literacy training. Title I customers are referred to ABE and Literacy Works programs, GED and External Diploma programs, based on the customers' needs. Carroll Community College is co-located in the BERC building, facilitating ease of access and resource sharing. We have MOUs with these entities for providing services and sharing information.

Job Corps occasionally uses the Columbia Workforce Center's for recruitment purposes. Job Corps participates in the youth council and on the WIB. Occasionally, the opportunity occurs for WIA youth to be co-enrolled in Job Corps.

Optional Partners

The Department of Social Services and Library system have been included as an optional partner due to the continued involvement with and provision of funding to local employment and training programs.

Through partnership with the Howard County Department of Social Services (DSS) the HCOWD will deliver work-based training activities, job placement and retention services designed to assist Temporary Cash Assistance (TCA) customers, Non-Custodial Parents (NPEP), and Foster Care Independent Living young adults in identifying and obtaining full-time unsubsidized employment opportunities that lead to permanent economic self-sufficiency. These services will simultaneously help these participating customers meet federal work participation requirements while improving the lives of current and future family members. We plan to continue this partnership with a local agreement with DSS.

Staff have provided an overview of MWE to library staff and have met with library staff to provide information about CWC and BERC services. Project Literacy staff, from the library, attended a CWC staff meeting and presented on Literacy services. Project Literacy focuses primarily on foreign born individuals needing assistance with achieving their high school diploma and other literacy activities. We have links to websites and are making referrals and share program information.

Title 1 representatives are available for resume and interview preparation for inmates preparing to re-enter the workforce after incarceration. We provide One-Stop contact information and encourage them to use the One-Stops for services. Staff has provided job search workshops and information at the Howard County Detention Center, Women's Correctional Institute and Laundry Facility in Sykesville.

For several years we have had a weekly presence at the North Laurel Multi-Service Center. The Center provides one-stop human services for people in the North Laurel and Savage areas of Howard County. The partnership allows clients to access a comprehensive mix of services close to their homes and address multiple problems in one location. Partners at the Center include: Community Action, Domestic Violence, FIRN, Grassroots, Legal Aid, DSS and other service providers. . We also have representation at the Laurel Regional Workforce Center. Interaction with customers is handled in-person, electronically, and over the phone. We are aware of the cost of gas and difficulty individuals have getting to the centers. All staff use available technology to provide services. We also physically go to various venues in the community to reach out to customers.

> Describe how the needs of dislocated workers, displaced homemakers, low-income individuals such as migrants and seasonal farmworkers, public assistance recipients, women, minorities, individuals training for non-traditional employment, veterans and individuals with multiple barriers to employment (including older individuals, people with limited English-speaking ability, and people with disabilities) are being met.

Although we no longer have a funded disability navigator we still receive calls for information and assistance. The former navigator provides those services to the community. We continue to partner with DORS, Citizen Services and the HCPSS for Career Exploration Day. This is a program where local students with disabilities job shadow county and private sector employees for ½ day to learn about the world of work.

Dislocated workers are provided access to all of the services in the One Stop Centers and all of the available resources. We have professional staff in all centers that are skilled in working with individuals ranging from GED through PhD. Staff customizes the approach for individuals depending on each person's needs. Services are determined based on the customer not a "one size fits all" approach.

Many dislocated workers we service have an IT background. With the proximity to federal agencies we actively participate in the FeDirect grant. We are offering federal job search workshops twice per month to assist individuals in learning how to navigate the federal employment process. We also provide case management and training for individuals under this grant for BRAC-impacted jobs.

In addition to FeDirect we also participate in the Pathways to CyberSecurity Partnership. We are training individuals to support our businesses and agencies against cyber attacks.

A partnership exists between the HCOWD and the local DSS office to assist a targeted part of the DSS population with finding work experience or employment. This is the WISH program. This program has been so successful that the local DSS office has moved money in their local budget to fund this initiative.

Members of the Columbia Workforce Center staff have provided an overview of MWE to library staff and have met with library staff to provide information about CWC services. Project Literacy staff, from the library, may attend a CWC staff meeting and present on Literacy services. We have links to websites and are making referrals and share program information.

Title 1 representatives are available for resume and interview preparation for inmates preparing to re-enter the workforce after incarceration. We provide One-Stop contact

information and encourage them to use the One-Stops for services. Staff has provided job search workshops and information at the Howard County Detention Center, Women's Correctional Institute and Laundry Facility in Sykesville.

BERC continues to work with the Carroll County Detention Center with their pre-release program. Inmates targeted for work release or releases are allowed to participate in BERC activities including direct staff assisted services. They become more job ready and able to secure meaningful employment that result in reduced recidivism.

BERC has also developed a working arrangement with the Carroll County Child Support Non-Custodial parent program. Non-custodial parents who are not working are referred to BERC to receive services that will hopefully end with a job enabling them to contribute to the support of their child (ren).

Additionally BERC is a member of the Circle of Caring committee that is comprised of numerous agencies focused on ending homelessness in Carroll County. This network of providers lends their support in their area of expertise that will ultimately result in a homeless individual find permanent housing and a job that results in self-sufficiency.

For the past several years we have had a presence at the North Laurel Multi-Service Center one day a week. The Center provides one-stop human services for people in the North Laurel and Savage areas of Howard County. The partnership allows clients to access a comprehensive mix of services close to their homes and address multiple problems in one location. Partners at the Center include: Community Action, Domestic Violence, FIRN, Grassroots homeless shelter and there are other partners.

Describe the role (if any) of local faith or community-based organizations in your workforce development system.

BERC is a member of the Carroll County Circle of Caring committee dedicated to serving one of our most vulnerable populations, the homeless. Local faith and community-based organizations are also members of this committee. When a homeless individual accesses services at BERC, BERC provides contact information to these organizations to assist them with some of their immediate needs, such as housing, food and sometimes health services. Once those needs are met the individual is referred back to BERC to continue with job readiness and job search assistance.

Attached is current MOU with extension request. Direction for new MOU/RSA is forthcoming from DLLR.

6. Services

a. Adults and Dislocated Workers

Describe the services provided to adults and dislocated workers in your area. Be sure to include local strategies and policies for ensuring that adults and dislocated workers have universal access to the minimum required core services.

In the Mid-Maryland workforce center we support the concept of universal access. We allow anyone to access Core Services and encourage the use of the Center through orientations, presentations, and any other means in which we promote the centers. Services are available according to the customers' needs and desires, but essentially focus on the core, intensive, and training models per the WIA design. Core services are available to everyone and are typically delivered at the comprehensive workforce centers. Rapid Response services are typically delivered at the employer's site. Some customers prefer using the resource center independently while others prefer assistance. Customers use MWE for self-directed services but also access staff-assisted core, as needed.

Each center's core services include: outreach, orientation/ overview of centers resources including partner resources; initial triage assessment; access to job search resources and tools at the centers, such as internet based resources including MWE and other job search websites; linkages to community partners; access to local, regional, and national labor market information.

Provision of Intensive Services includes: Title I eligibility determination and registration; case management and counseling, (includes one-on-one consultation in order to assess and address any job search barriers); pre-vocational skill development; career development; basic education and remediation (literacy); development of workable strategies, interventions; short-term courses or classes to enhance marketability to high growth, high demand industries in the local labor market; job search assistance applicable to the service tier, and follow-up.

Provision of Training Services, includes: job readiness, on-the-job training, occupational skills in high growth and high demand employment areas; adult education and literacy and job match/placement activities. MWE definitions for intensive and training service levels are used as a guiding tool.

Describe your supportive service policy for adults and dislocated workers in accordance with the definition at sections 101 (46) and 134 (e) (2) of the WIA Act.

The Mid-Maryland Area offers coordinated supportive services, as funding allows, for adults and dislocated workers. Supportive services enable an individual to participate in WIA Title I core, intensive and training activities, and include but are not limited to transportation, child-care, dependent care, housing, and needs-based payments, and are calculated on an individual, as-needed basis. To be eligible for supportive services payments, an adult or dislocated worker customer must be receiving, intensive, or training services, and unable to obtain supportive services through other programs.

Describe your needs-related payment policy for adults and dislocated workers as defined in section 134 (e)

Needs-Related Payment Policy

Mid-Maryland offers Needs-Related Payments only as funding allows and customer need. Payments may be provided to adults and dislocated workers who have exhausted their UI benefits or who did not qualify for UI, or compensation under the Trade Adjustment Assistance Reform Act of 2002, to enable participation in WIA programs.

Eligible adults and dislocated workers must have been enrolled in training (defined as beginning training within 30 days) by the end of the 13th week after the most recent lay-off that caused the dislocated worker to become eligible for employment and training activities; or, if later, by the end of the 8th week after an employee is informed that a short-term layoff will in fact exceed six (6) months. In Mid-Maryland, the level of needs-related payments has been set at $150/week, not to exceed the applicable level of unemployment compensation or the USDOL LLSIL.

Describe the Individual Training Account (ITA) policy used in the local area and include a copy as an attachment to the plan. The description should include information such as selection process, instruction regarding Pell Grants or other awards, dollar limits, duration, etc. Also describe the policy and process developed by the local area for training strategies which fall outside

> the parameters of ITAs: OJT, Customized Training or Training for Special Populations Facing Multiple Barriers to Employment. (WIFI 10-99, Change 1 and WIFI 11-99)

Customers may be eligible for training services after prior attempts to secure employment have been unsuccessful or it has been documented that the training service will lead directly to employment. Initially customers must access Core and Intensive Services. After assessment and consultation with a counselor, and substantiation of labor market information and labor demand, customers must provide justification with merit for an ITA account. The training emphasis will be in response to local labor market needs, specifically in high growth or high demand occupations. Participants have the right to select the training provider from the Maryland Higher Education Commission (MHEC) approved list or in accordance with WIFI 11-99.

ITA limits on duration and value are established based on the individual needs and circumstances of the customer and funding availability and customer needs in relation to labor market demand; adjustments are made after submission of quarterly reports; ceiling values are based on current obligations, expenditures, accruals, and balances. There is an on-going assessment in terms of balance of funds and anticipated numbers to be served. Leveraging of funds with partner agencies is routinely used. At the time of this writing the ITA limit for dislocated workers is $8,000 and $4,000 for adults. Funding amounts beyond this limit may be approved on a case-by-case basis when there is no anticipation of a future funding shortage. The amount of ITAs for youth are determined on a case-by-case basis; In Mid-Maryland we support training that includes career pathways.

In Howard County, customers are required to sign-off that they have been notified of the requirement to apply for Pell Grants or other awards, as applicable. In Carroll County there is an item on a training approval checklist that must be checked indicating the customer has applied for Pell. The fiscal manager will not approve the training if that has not been completed and a copy of pell letter attached.

> Describe the local priority of service policy developed by the LWIB for providing Intensive and Training Services to Adult Participants under WIA Title I. The local policy will need to clearly explain whether there is a constant policy enforced during the entire WIA program period or a policy containing thresholds & triggers of funding obligations and expenditures for policy implementation. The local policy must include a description of how the LIWB has implemented the Veterans' Priority Provision of the "Jobs for Veterans Act" (PL 107-288). Also explain priority given to public assistance or other low-income individual and criteria developed for use of other funds, serving specific populations groups, and other appropriate factors unique to the local area (WIFI 4-99).

Priority of Service Policy

Mid-Maryland has adopted a Priority of Service policy that is two-fold to address both the veterans' priority provisions of the Jobs for Veterans' Act and the policy that is triggered by fiscal benchmarks.

Veterans and spouses are entitled to priority of service under any qualified job training program if the person otherwise meets the program eligibility requirements. The Jobs for Veterans' Act policy is constant and has the following priority levels:

1. First, to veterans who are on welfare or are low income (LLSIL).

2. Spouses of veterans as detailed below under the Jobs for Veterans Act.

3. Welfare recipients or other low-income people, as established by the LLSIL.

4. Veterans not receiving public assistance or who are low-income.

Eligible spouses as referred to in #2 above are spouses of any of the following:

- A veteran who died of a service-connected disability.

- A veteran who has a total service connected disability.

- Any veteran who died while undergoing evaluation for a disability.

- An active duty Armed Forces member who for a total of more than 90 days has been MIA (missing in action) or a POW (prisoner of war).

Priority of Service

Eligible veterans and eligible spouses who otherwise meet eligibility requirements for a program or service receive priority.

Application of the triggered priority of service is determined by obligations and expenditures, with quarterly benchmarks at 25%, 50%, and 75%. If the obligations/expenditures are exceeded and there are insufficient funds, the following categories of participants will be provided services as follows:

First Priority Level

1. First, to veterans and eligible spouses who are on welfare or are low-income (LLSIL).

2. Welfare recipients or other low-income people, as established by the LLSIL.

Second Priority Level:

An individual with one or more of the following barriers:

- Basic skill deficiency or lacking HS diploma

- Individual with a disability

- Ex-offender

- Obsolete skills relative to current labor market needs

- Older worker

- Multiple job losses within a year

- English as a second language

- Homeless

Applicants are required to seek training funds for other sources including: Federal Pell. WIA funds will supplement other training grant funds awarded to the applicant.

Describe the local policy for defining "self sufficiency" and "inability to retain employment" (663.230). Employed individuals may qualify for intensive services or retraining services if it can be established that the services are needed to retain employment that leads to "self sufficiency." For employed Adult participants, minimally, the local self-sufficiency policy criteria will need to require employment paying a wage at least equal to the lower living standard income level. For employed Dislocated Workers, the local dislocate worker self-sufficiency policy may define eligibility based on current wages equal to or below a percentage of their prior layoff wage (WIFI 2-99).

In Mid-Maryland, employed adults earning less than 150% of the Lower Living Standard Income Level, in relation to family size, may qualify for intensive services or training services. Levels are defined by the current USDOL Lower Living Standard Income Levels for the State of Maryland

Employed dislocated workers may qualify for intensive or retraining services as needed to retain employment leading to self-sufficiency or if their current wage is less than 50% of their wage at dislocation. The training request must be reasonable in relation to the current use of training dollars, and local labor market conditions (high growth/high demand) and what appears to be a prudent use of taxpayer dollars.

Mid-Maryland's definition of "inability to retain employment" is defined as the loss of two or more jobs during the twelve months preceding the eligibility determination.

In Carroll County, the staff contact person who will work with the State Dislocated Worker Unit to plan and provide Rapid Response services, is Denise Rickell, of the Business and Employment Resource Center. Chris Winebrenner is the designated alternate. The staff contact person at the Columbia Workforce Center is Mitra Basu with Shelia Little as the designated alternate

The strategic planning process for the youth of Mid-Maryland includes input from members of the Youth Council, community youth services providers, and Title I staff. The strategy involves identifying and addressing the gaps in youth services related to successfully completing an educational program and responding to the needs of employers requiring an enhancement of skills before entry into employment.

Strong community partnerships exist to supplement and enhance the core services provided to area youth. For example, youth service providers and staff participates in local parenting and teen pregnancy prevention efforts. DORS counselors and other disability service providers are involved in the on-going partnering process to ensure continuity of services to youth with disabilities. Other community partnerships involve professional personnel through the public school system and youth treatment and counseling centers. The connections created through these partnerships aid in aligning youth with services to support a comprehensive delivery system. Continued monitoring of these services will occur to ensure that any identified gaps or deficiencies, therein, are addressed, and any duplication of services to youth is avoided.

Individual Training Accounts (ITA) for out-**of-school** youth may be used to provide training for youth in high-growth, high-demand industries. The appropriateness of using the waiver will be based on several factors, including availability of funds. One of the primary considerations in providing a youth with an ITA is that the youth first have a High School diploma or equivalent. If the youth has obtained a high school diploma or equivalent, whether through our program or not, and is interested in obtaining skills to become a more productive member of the workforce then an ITA may be an option. In considering using the ITA the following factors will be taken into consideration by the case manager before making a final determination:

- Youth are eligible to participate in training, as required by WIA

- An objective assessment has been completed including a review of basic skills, occupational skills, prior work experience, employability, interest, aptitudes, supportive services and developmental needs

- An ISS is developed for the youth participant to plan how to achieve goals

- An age-appropriate career-goal is determined.

- The youth shows the case manager a commitment to complete the training

  AND

- The youth commits to searching for training-related employment upon completion of the training.

Youth are exposed to post-secondary educational opportunities at the community colleges. There is a very close relationship between the youth counselors and members of the community college staff. In Howard County, ABE/GED classes are held on the grounds of the community college which exposes the youth to post-secondary opportunities on a daily basis; classes are also held at the CWC to expose the youth to employment and training services. The youth counselor has office space at HCC. The youth counselor and youth can research various other educational opportunities using internet based resources. The youth counselor coordinates with other entities serving youth to connect with the business community. In Carroll County, Carroll Community College is the Adult Education provider and post-secondary education staff provides continuing education information at orientation. Additionally, all graduates are oriented to the process of continuing their education at Carroll Community College.

For many years the Mid-Maryland youth allocation was under $100k to service both counties. Since the change in economic times recently the youth allocation has increased. We have greatly expanded the number of youth being served in the WIA with these additional resources. We plan to bid at least one RFP and perhaps more. The RFP will include elements of the WIA

requirements in its design. Currently the case management staff has been primarily responsible for the program elements. We have just begun providing subsidized work experience with Howard county government sites. The sites vary and include: the Human Rights Office, Purchasing, Finance, and the Office on Aging. At minimum, youth are mentored at these sites along with receiving subsidized employment and work experience.

We refer individuals to Job Corp and have staff on their Boards. In turn, Job Corp. is represented on the Mid-Maryland WIB and on the Youth Council. We partner and refer youth to the Job Corp Centers. Some Mid-Maryland youth are accessing and using Job Corp services.

The youth counselors have made connections with other WIA youth counselors in the Region and participate in the best practices workgroups for youth.

Describe local strategies which support USDOL/ETA's vision for serving youth.

Providing youth with a basic high school education is critical to responding to a demand-driven labor market. The public school systems in Mid-Maryland have consistently provided educational programming with strong outcomes. Quality alternative education programming is supported by the WIB and Title I staff through establishing connections with the students and in providing leadership experiences, and job readiness preparation opportunities. In Howard County, the Alternative Education curriculum includes tutoring and study skills training, dropout prevention strategies, such as evening and Saturday school, and mentoring. In Carroll County, alternative education is provided by the public school system in two ways, both of which are designed to either keep at risk youth in school or facilitate the return of drop-outs to the public school system. The Flexible Student Support Program (FSSP), Carroll County Public Schools, offers three alternatives, all of which are directed toward small class or individualized instruction. The Student Support Center offers small class (usually four students) academic courses. The Distance Learning Lab offers individualized on-line academic courses in a small class setting while the Diversified Occupations Program offers academic credit for supervised work experience and instructional teaching. The second alternative education program is Gateway School. It too offers small class academic instruction and a diversified occupation program. Title I youth participating in the Carroll County Youth Program is served by both of these offerings.

Identify the youth eligibility criteria to be used by the local area, if any (664.210)

Mid-Maryland youth served with WIA funding must be income eligible and have a barrier to successful employment. Youth served have some barrier to successful completion of their

program that includes out-of-school youth, migrant and seasonal farm worker youth, youth in foster care or aging out of foster care, youth known to the justice system, and youth of incarcerated parents, Indian and Native American youth , and youth with disabilities. Issues of homelessness, difficulties in home relationships, child-care, self-confidence, substance abuse, and self-responsibility abound. Additionally, the vast majority of Title I youth have a diagnosed disability.

Identify and provide (if any) a justification for your WIA determined additional barrier as identified by the local board in accordance with Section 129(c) (5) of the WIA law.

The sixth youth eligibility criterion, as developed by the Mid-Maryland Youth Council, is the need for "additional assistance to complete an educational program or secure and hold employment." This is defined by the LWIB as a need for additional education, vocational training, or intensive career counseling and related assistance, in order to participate successfully in regular schoolwork or to secure and hold employment. It is further defined as follows: a lack of employability skills, including social skills; an inability to retain jobs (lost two or more jobs during the 12 months preceding eligibility determination), documented by the counselor during initial assessment; or, a lack of prior work experience (the youth has not worked for the same employer for longer than three consecutive months in the one year preceding eligibility determination), documented by the counselor during initial assessment.

The Mid-MD LWIB policy defines "other youth facing serious barriers to employment" as it relates to successful entry into the workforce and retention of employment as:

- In –school- youth – Youth who are at risk of dropping out, have excessive absences from school, or have three or more suspensions will be referred from a state-accredited school.

- Out-of-school youth – Lack of work history, i.e., youth has not worked for the same employer for more than three months in the previous year or have lost two or more jobs in the twelve months preceding eligibility determination. Self-declaration during initial assessment will serve as documentation for lack of work history.

Providing an opportunity for services to those youth who may not otherwise be eligible is the justification for defining other youth facing serious barriers to employment. This barrier was

identified in order to address the poor behaviors and attitudes on a timely basis, to prepare these youth to make a positive contribution to today's labor force.

> Up to five percent (5%) of youth participants in a local area may be individuals who do not met income criterion for eligible youth in accordance with Section 664.220 of the WIA regulations. Indicate how these rations will be monitored.

The ratio of up to five percent of youth participants in Mid-Maryland that do not meet income criterion for eligible youth in accordance with Section 664.220 is and will continue to be monitored by the Mid-Maryland MIS manager.

Customer Flow System

> Describe the continuum of services and customer flow through the three tiers of WIA services in the local area, including:
>
> - Identification of service needs
>
> - Assessment and eligibility determination
>
> - Movement of customer through there tiers of service (Core, Intensive and Training)
>
> - Development of individualized training/employment plans
>
> - Referral process to other agencies
>
> - Case Management and follow-up
>
> - Post-program follow-up

In Mid-Maryland there are several ways to flow through the tiers of services. Through various means of assessment, staff and partners determine the customer's level of job readiness and identify resources, which are applicable to the customer's needs and goals. Core services are most often provided by Wagner Peyser or WIA staff. Partners provide services related to the identified needs in the core assessment/triage, or a referral is made to the appropriate partner offering the indicated services.

Job seekers also receive core services through an informational overview session. The service is designed to acquaint the job seekers with the resources that are available through the one-stop center. However, if a job seeker received core services through some means other than the one-stop orientation overview, and that service is documented as well as the provider of the core services is then possible to receive the next tier of service. Job Seekers are encouraged to register using the MWE system. Documentation is then collected when the job seeker requests intensive level services. After the initial assessment determining the customer's eligibility and level of job readiness, intensive services are provided through a variety of activities. At this time any need for other partner or community services is identified and the appropriate referrals are given. If intensive services are not sufficient for a customer to obtain employment he/she may be eligible to receive third tier training services.

The WIA staff determines the need for Intensive Services based on the customer's inability to achieve the employment goal. Title I staff determines eligibility. At the time of initial assessment, a pre-screening for eligibility and identification of barriers (priority of service) and support needs is completed; a release of information is obtained allowing the customer information to be sent along with a referral as necessary.

The types of Intensive services offered are determined through a variety of activities, including but not limited to; individualized assessments and development of an individual employment plan or service strategy (IEP); counseling/career planning and case management; short-term pre-vocational services; and collaborative case management between the referring partner and WIA staff as indicated.

WIA staff determines the need for third tier Training Services based on the customer's inability to obtain the employment goal through Intensive services. The options for training type are based on the accrued data developed through the Core and Intensive service levels linked to the customer's skills and background along with opportunities for employment and labor market demand are all considered in the determination for the need for training. Follow-up services are provided for a minimum of twelve (12) months through the One-Stop system.

> In addition, describe the customer flow process used in the local area. This description should include eligibility assessment (core to intensive & training, priority of services), individualized training plans, and case management.

See immediately above.

8. Performance Management

Describe what tools and strategies will be developed to ensure meeting annually negotiated performance standards

The Mid-Maryland LWIB adopts the State and Governor's proposed benchmarks as the local performance expectations. In order to meet the standards, Mid-Maryland will use local and state performance data and reports.   The WIB will also monitor the local WIA and one-stop performance.

The Mid-Maryland WIB adopts the standards set forth by the State. If it appears the standards are not attainable the Mid-Maryland WIA will request to re-negotiate the standards with the state.

9. Sunshine Provision

Describe the process used to involve the public in the development of the local plan.

Mid-Maryland has made efforts to involve the public in the plan's development, service strategies and offerings. Opportunities for public review and comment on the Five-Year Plan have been advertised and are posted in each county's website.

The DLLR website address http://www.dllr.state.md.us/ is routinely made available to the public.

ADMINISTRATIVE PROVISIONS (SECTION IV)

A. Participant Eligibility Process

Please describe local policy and procedures regarding Youth, Adult, and Dislocated Worker participant eligibility, as it relates to WIA. Procedures should be developed in accordance with WIFI 02-99.

The Mid-Maryland One-Stop Centers offer universal access to Core Services. Adults and Dislocated Workers who are in need of Title I services (Intensive and Training) beyond self-directed or Core Services will be screened for eligibility. The LWIB Priority of Service, as detailed on page 22, is implemented according to the established fiscal benchmarks.

Adults: To be eligible for Intensive and Training services an Adult must be:

- 18 years of age or older.

- A US Citizen or lawfully admitted resident alien/refugee or other individual authorized to work in the U.S.

- Males - born on or after 1/1/60 must have complied with the Selective Service Act.

Employed adults must be "low income" individuals. The term "low income individual" means an individual who received an income, or is a member of a family that received a total family income, for the 6-month period prior to registration for the program that, in relation to family size, does not exceed 150% of the USDOL Lower Living Standard Income Level.   Additionally, an individual receiving, or determined eligible to receive food stamps during the 6-month period prior to application; an individual who qualifies as homeless under the Stewart B. McKinney Homeless Assistance Act; or an individual with a disability whose own income meets the definition of low income, but who is a member of a family whose income does not meet the definition.

Documentation required to prove eligibility may include proof of age, proof of family size, and proof of income. Examples of acceptable documents are:

- Birth Certificate

- Passport

- Court Decree

- Landlord Statement

- Dept. of Social Services records

- Pay Stubs

- Public Assistance Records

- Divorce Decree

- Social Security Card

Dislocated Workers: To be an eligible Dislocated Worker, an individual must be:

- 18 years of age or older

- A US Citizen or lawfully admitted resident alien/refugee or other individual authorized to work in the U.S.

- Males - born on or after 1/1/60 must have complied with the Selective Service Act

- **AND**

- An individual who has been terminated or laid off, or who has received a notice of termination or layoff, from employment; **and**

- is eligible for or has exhausted entitlement to unemployment compensation;

Or

- Has been employed for a duration sufficient to demonstrate attachment to the workforce, but is not eligible for unemployment compensation due to insufficient earnings or having performed services for an employer that were not covered under a State unemployment compensation law; **and**

- is unlikely to return to a previous industry or occupation; **or**

- Has been terminated or laid off, or has received a notice of termination or layoff, from employment as a result of a permanent closure, or substantial layoff; **or**

- Is employed at a facility at which the employer has made a general announcement that the facility will close within 180 days; **or**

- Was self-employed, but is unemployed as a result of general economic conditions in an area in which the individual resides or because of natural disasters; **or**

- Is a Displaced Homemaker

Required documentation will include proof of age, and proof of dislocated status. Examples of acceptable documents are:

- Birth Certificate

- Passport

- Baptismal Certificate

- Letter of dislocation notification from employer

- Unemployment Compensation records

Youth**:** An eligible youth is defined as an individual who is:

- Ages 14 through 21

- A low income individual (as defined in the adult eligibility section above)

  AND

- Within one or more of the following categories:

- Deficient in basic literacy skills (computes, reads, writes or speaks

- English at or below grade level 8>9;

- Is unable to compute, read, write or speak English at a level

  Required to function on the job, in the family or in society)

- School dropout

- Homeless, runaway, or foster child

- Pregnant or parenting

- Offender

- An individual who requires additional assistance to complete an educational program or to secure and hold employment (as defined in Section 6b(3) of this plan)

Up to 5% of youth participants may be individuals who are not "low income", but must be within one or more of the following categories:

- School dropout

- Basic skills deficient (as defined above)

- One or more grade levels below the grade level appropriate to the individual's age

- Pregnant or parenting

- Possess one or more disabilities, including learning disabilities

- Homeless or runaway

- Offender

- Faces serious barriers to employment (as defined in Section 6b(3) of this plan

Required documentation will include:

- Proof of age,

- Proof of family size,

- Proof of family income,

- Proof of existent barriers.

Examples of acceptable documents are:

- Birth Certificate

- Baptismal Certificate

- School records

- Court Decree

- Dept. of Social Services records

- Pay stubs

- Public Assistance Records

- Existence of barriers-public assistance records, school records, DORS,

- Dept. of Juvenile Justice records, etc.

B. Oversight and Monitoring

Describe the LWIA procedures for conducting oversight and monitoring of its WIA activities and those of its subrecipients and contracts. The monitoring plan shall address the monitoring scope and frequency and shall include the following:

A requirement that all subrecipient agreements and contracts be monitored on-site at least annually

The Mid-Maryland Workforce Investment Area does not have any Sub recipient Agreements in place with its suppliers or service providers. All relationships with suppliers and service providers are of a vendor – customer's basis whereas vendors are paid upon delivery or completion of services provided.

The Mid-Maryland One-Stop Operator or Administrative Entity monitors sub-recipient agreements and contracts on an annual basis. Sub-recipients and contracts, with terms exceeding twelve (12) months, are monitored on-site, at least on an annual basis, or more frequently if routine desk monitoring indicates a need.

 Sub-recipients of less than 12-months are monitored at least once during the contract period.

> Procedures for determining that expenditures have been made against the cost categories and within the cost limitations specified in the Act and WIA regulations

Fiscal personnel review sub-recipient and contractor records and invoices to ensure that expenditures have been made against the cost categories and within the cost limitations as specified in the contracts. This information is tracked against enrollment records at the time of invoice.

> Procedures for determining compliance with other provisions of the Act and regulations and other applicable laws and regulations

The on-site monitoring visit will also ensure compliance with other provisions of the Act and the regulations and other applicable laws and regulations through interviews with sub-recipient staff, and review of sub-recipient records.

> Provisions for the recording of findings made by the receipients' monitor(s), the forwarding of such finding to the subrecipient or contractor for response and the recording of all corrective actions

Written recordings of the findings for each monitoring visit will be forwarded to the sub-recipient for response and become part of the Mid-Maryland's file. Corrective action and the required time frames for completion are documented accordingly.

> Provision of technical assistance as necessary and appropriate; and specific local polices developed by the WIB for oversight of the One-Stop system, youth activities and employment and training activities under Title I of WIA.

Technical assistance is offered at the conclusion of the review to ensure that any corrective actions can be implemented prior to the closure of the monitoring review process.

The LWIB, in conjunction with the local administrative structures, provides oversight and strategic planning of the One-Stop system activities. The LWIB voted to allow the Youth Council authority to oversee the youth activities on behalf of the Board.

C. Grievance Procedures/Complaint Processing Procedures

Describe the Workforce Investment Area's procedures for handling grievances and complaints from participants and other interested parties affected by the local Workforce Investment system, including one-stop partners and service providers.

Please see Mid-Maryland's Grievance and Complaint Procedures Policy (Attachment II)

Any person who believes that either he or she, or any specific class of individuals, has been or is being subjected to discrimination prohibited under the Workforce Investment Act has the option to file a written complaint with either the Mid-Maryland WIA EO Officer or the Director of the Civil Rights Center (CRC).

Recipient Discrimination Complaint Processing Procedures

a. Complaints must be filed within 180 days of the alleged discrimination.

b. Each complaint must be filed in writing and contain the following information:

- Complainant's name and address, or alternate means of contact

- Identity of the individual or entity that the complainant alleges is responsible for the discrimination

- Description of the complainant's allegations, including enough detail to determine if the CRC or Recipient has jurisdiction over the complaint, the complaint was filed in time and that the complaint has apparent merit

- Complainant's signature or the signature of the complainant's authorized representative

c. Complaints may be filed by completing and submitting CRC's Complaint Information and Privacy Act Consent Form

      d.   Both the complainant and the respondent have the right to be represented by an attorney or other representative.

      e.   If a complaint filed with the Mid-Maryland WIA EO Officer is determined not to be under the local area's jurisdiction, the EO Officer will immediately notify the complainant, in writing, providing a statement of the reason for that determination, notice that the complainant has a right to file a complaint with CRC within 30 days of the date on which the complainant receives the notice.

> Provide a separate description for the following categories of complaints:
>
> - Complaints alleging discrimination on the ground of race, color, religion, sex, national origin, age, disability, political affiliation or belief, and for beneficiaries only, citizenship or participation in any WIA Title I – financially assisted program or activity;
>
> - Complaints and grievances not alleging illegal forms of discrimination. This includes grievances from individuals alleging labor standards violations.

Discriminatory Complaints

Any person, including but not limited to program applicants, registrants, participants, service providers, contractors, labor unions, community-based organizations, employees, and applicants for employment, who believes that he or she has been, or is being, subjected to discrimination prohibited under the WIA may file a complaint, either individually or through an authorized representative.

All complaints must be made in writing and may be directed to Mid-Maryland Equal Opportunity Officer, BERC, 224 N. Center Street, Westminster, MD, 21157; or directly to The Director, Civil Rights Center (CRC) U.S. Department of Labor, 200 Constitution Avenue, NW, Room N-4123, Washington, DC 20210.

Non-Discriminatory Complaints

All nondiscrimination complaints (complaints not based on claims of discrimination) must be made in writing, to the Mid-Maryland Director or Equal Opportunity Officer, within 60 days of the date of the alleged incident. (see address above).

Informational postings regarding Maryland Labor Law are accessible to customers. These contain information pertaining to Minimum Wage, Fair Employment, Child Labor, Health Insurance, Unemployment Insurance, Equal Pay for Equal Work, Workers Compensation, MD Occupational Safety & Health (MOSH) Program & Wage Payment & Collection. Contact

information is included on these postings. We also refer customers to the DLLR website for further information and reference.

Informational postings regarding Maryland Labor Law are accessible to customers. These contain information pertaining to Minimum Wage, Fair Employment, Child Labor, Health Insurance, Unemployment Insurance, Equal Pay for Equal Work, Workers Compensation, MD Occupational Safety & Health (MOSH) Program & Wage Payment & Collection. Contact information is included on these postings. We also refer customers to the DLLR website for further information and reference.

The local area grievance procedures should also include the remedies that may be imposed for a violation of any requirement under WIA Title I, limited to:

- Suspension or termination of payments under the title;

- Prohibition of placement of a participant with an employer that has violated any requirement under WIA Title I;

- Where applicable, reinstatement of an employee, payment of lost wages and benefits, and reestablishment of other relevant terms, conditions, and privileges of employment; and

- Where appropriate, other equitable relief.

Remedies for violation of any requirement may include:

- Suspension or termination of payments to a program participant or vendor under Title I.
- Suspension or termination of payments to or contract with an employer.
- Efforts toward reinstatement of an employee when applicable.
- Other equitable alternatives.

D. Nondiscrimination and Equal Opportunity Provisions

Reasonable Accommodation: With regard to aid, benefits, services, training, and employment, include a statement of assurance that you will provide reasonable accommodation to qualified individuals with disabilities unless providing the accommodation would cause undue hardship.

Mid-Maryland will provide reasonable accommodation to qualified individuals with disabilities with regard to aid, benefits, services, training, and employment, unless providing the accommodation would cause undue hardship.

> Communication – Individuals with Disabilities: Describe what steps you will take to ensure that communications with individuals with disabilities, including individuals with visual or hearing impairments, are as effective as communications with others.

In Mid-Maryland, both Carroll and Howard Counties are in compliance with the ADA for all programs, facilities, services and activities. The Division of Rehabilitative Services, county government entities that provide accommodations and other community-based organizations are used to ensure that communication with qualified individuals with disabilities, including individuals who are deaf or hard of hearing, are as effective as communications with the hearing population.   Local government processes are followed for securing interpreters and translators.

> Notice and Communication – Languages Other Than English: Describe what steps you will take to meet the language needs of limited-English-speaking individuals who seek services or information.

Staff complies with the state and/or county LEP policies. Title I staff will also coordinate with other partners and county resources such as community colleges, New Windsor Refugee Center, four-year liberal arts schools, the Foreign-Born Information and Referral Network, and MAPS (Maryland Access Point of Service), all of which have the capacity to meet the language needs of limited-English speaking individuals.

E. Procurement and Contracting Procedures

> Describe your procurement system and include a statement of assurance that the procedures conform to the standards in DOL regulations 29 CFR Part 97 Uniform Administrative Requirements For Grants and Cooperative Agreements to States and Local Governments, or 29 CFR Part 95 Uniform Administrative Requirements for Grants and Cooperative Agreements with Institutions of Higher Education, Hospitals and Other Non-Profit Organizations.

Procurement procedures for Howard and Carroll Counties, which comprise the Mid-Maryland WIA, are attached. (Attachment III) These procedures conform to the standards in DOL regulations 29 CFR Part 97 and Part 95 (Uniform Administrative Requirements for Grants and Cooperative Agreements). Part 97 refers to States and Local Governments and Part 95 refers to Institutions of Higher Education, Hospitals and Other Non-Profit Organizations.

> Provide a statement of assurance or other documentation to demonstrate that the acquisition, management, and disposition of property adhere to the Property Management Procedures taken from DOL regulations 29 CFR Part 97 and 29 CFR Part 95.

This statement is to assure that the acquisition, management, and disposition of property adhere to the Property Management Procedures taken from DOL regulations 29 CFR Part 97 and 29 CFR Part 95.

> Include a statement of assurance that the LWIB has adopted procedures to avoid conflicts of interest or the appearance of such conflicts in the exercise of their responsibilities, particularly those related to the awarding of contracts.

All Mid-Maryland WIB members sign a Conflict of Interest Policy to assure avoidance of conflict of interest in their responsibilities, particularly those related to the awarding of contracts. (Attachment IV)

F. Fiscal Controls

> Describe the LWIB or fiscal agent's accounting procedures, including the procedures used in preparing reports to the State. In addition to the requirement that all financial transactions be conducted in compliance with GAAP, your fiscal management system must include the following in your accounting procedures.
>
> The fiscal system must be adequate to track by grant award, the following:
>
> (1) Obligations
>
> (2) Expenditures
>
> (3) Assets
>
> For each individual grant, the fiscal system must permit the tracking of:
>
> (1) Program income
>
> (2) Stand-in costs
>
> (3) Profits
>
> The system must be adequate to prepare financial reports required by the State.

1. Financial Management - All financial transactions will be conducted and records will be maintained in accordance with Generally Accepted Accounting Principles (GAAP).

2. Through a combination of specially designed Excel worksheets and the Howard County SAP system, control of obligations and expenditures is maintained. The County financial system (SAP) records the amount of funds available for each grant, the amount of expenditures, and the current balance

3. The fiscal manager follows the county's standard procedures and review for fund availability against obligations initiated for routine supply purchases.

4. Mid-Maryland operates on a cost reimbursement basis. There is no program income.

Identify the key staff who will be working with WIA funds.

1. Carroll County BERC: Christine Cruz, Fiscal Manager
2. John Pettebone, Fiscal Manager and Mary Jane Chiacchio, Fiscal Specialist

Describe how the LWIB's (or fiscal agent's) financial system will permit tracing of funds to a level adequate to establish that funds have not been used in violation of WIA standards or DOL regulations.

1. Internal controls are in place for ensuring that all expenditures are for allowable purposes and that expenditures are charged to the proper cost category.

2. Upon submission of an invoice by a vendor or service provider for payment, the Fiscal Manager reviews the invoice for accuracy and compares it against the contract to ensure compliance.

   a. Invoices must be accompanied by back-up documentation that must be retained in the WIA office for a minimum of 5 years.

3. Following approval of the invoice, it is compared with the obligation log and corresponding grant account.

4. Utilizing the County's electronic purchasing and payment processing system, the Fiscal Manager prepares a payment request to process and post the transaction to the appropriate grant expenditure fund.

5. The payment request is electronically forwarded to the Director for review and approval. When approved, the Director releases the transaction, which is automatically routed to the appropriate approval levels in the Purchasing, Budget and Finance Departments depending on the amount and type of transaction.

6. Once the above controls are met, the transaction is approved for payment and submitted for processing.

7. Payments are processed weekly by the Accounts Payable Section of the Finance Department in the form of electronic funds transfers or by check.

8. Copies of the payment documents are maintained in the administrative office and compared against the monthly transaction listing reports generated by the Finance Office.

   a. Any discrepancies are reconciled by the Fiscal Manager.

9. Carroll County follows similar procedures and forwards invoices for their expenditures to OWD on a monthly basis for reimbursement.

Provide a brief description of the Fiscal reporting system

The Howard County OWD accounting system utilizes a Microsoft Excel based format for tracking and compiling all financial information of the Mid-Maryland WIA offices. The information will be used to generate Requisitions for Cash, Quarterly Status Reports, Final Closeout Reports, and any other ad hoc reports as needed by the Director and the WIB.

On a monthly basis, the Howard County Department of Finance's Detail Listing of Obligations vs. Budget (A-103) and the Trial Balance By Accounting Distribution (A-611) shall be reconciled with OWD's accounting system. After all transactions have been accounted for and any

corrections made (through journal entries) the accounting system has been verified to begin report preparation.

Provide a brief description of the Obligation control system

See above explanation

Provide a brief description of the ITA payment system

ITA Payment System – See the above explanation regarding Accounts Payable System. If a customer is Pell Eligible they will be required to submit documentation showing the amount of the award. This information will be provided to the Fiscal Manger for tracking.

Provide a brief description of the Chart of account system

The following string depicts the order of our chart of accounts

Fund (general, grant, etc.) (xxxxxxxxxx)
Business Area (xxxx)
Cost Center (xxxxxxxxxx)
General Ledger Account (salaries, training, supplies, etc.) (xxxxxx)
Functional Area (Funding Stream) (xxxxxxxxxxxxxxxx)
Internal Order (Grant Specific) (xxxxxxxxxxxxxxxxxxx)

Provide a brief description of the Accounts payable system

See explanation above

Provide a brief description of the Staff payroll system

OWD staff sign and submit time and attendance sheets on a bi-weekly basis that include attendance information for each day of the week to the Office's timekeeper.

Office's timekeeper reviews the time sheets against the "Leave of Absence" slips that were previously approved by management, and submits a report to the County's Payroll Department after obtaining the appropriate supervisory personnel's signature.

Payroll Department enters the data submitted by all departments into the County Payroll system which when balanced is uploaded to ADP for processing.

ADP generates the bi-weekly paychecks which are distributed by the Payroll Department

Carroll County follows the same procedures except they process payroll internally through the county's financial management system.

Provide a brief description of the Participant payroll system

Youth who participate in paid work experiences are hired through the respective counties' Human Resource Departments as contractual/contingent employees and are paid wages through the County's' payroll department following the same procedures as regular County employees.

Provide a brief description of the Participant stipend payment system

Mid-Maryland does not pay stipends.

Provide a statement of assurance that all financial transactions will be conducted and records maintained in accordance with General Accepted Accounting Procedures (GAAP).

All financial transactions will be conducted and records maintained in accordance with General Accepted Accounting Procedures (GAAP).

Describe the LWIB's (or fiscal agent's) cash management system, providing assurance that no excess cash will be kept on hand, and that procedures are in place to monitor cash.

The Mid-Maryland WIA operates on a cash reimbursement basis thus assuring that no excess cash will be kept on hand and procedures are in place to monitor cash. The Area's requisitions

will be based on reimbursement for accrued expenditures already incurred.

The Area prepares and submits cash requisitions to DLLR on a regular basis.

Upon receipt of revenues (reimbursed expenditures) from DLLR, by the cashiers office. Fiscal manager is then notified of the deposit and reconciles funds received to the requisitions submitted.

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Describe your cost allocation procedures including:

- Identification of different cost pools

- Procedures for distribution of staff costs between cost categories.

- Procedures used for distribution of funds from each cost pool.

- Description of funds included in each cost pool.

- Description of cost allocation plans for One-Stop Centers.

</div>

The Mid-Maryland WIA offices assure that they use cost allocation methods that are both reasonable and consistently applied for the entire program year. These offices will also maintain adequate documentation to support the distribution of costs to the various funding sources and cost categories.

Howard County OWD will charge costs that benefit a single funding source and /or cost category directly. All indirect and unassigned costs will be identified and accumulated in the cost pools, Administrative Cost Pool (ACP) and Training Cost Pool (TCP), and distributed based on acceptable cost allocation methodologies.

The ACP cost center accumulates administrative expenses (e.g. Administrator and Fiscal Manager's wages and fringes, supplies, telephone, etc.), which will be distributed to the WIA administration cost category.

Training Cost Pool

The TCP cost center accumulates indirect training costs (e.g. program consultants' wages and fringes, mileage, supplies, etc.) and allocates these expenses via time distribution to the Adult Program, the Youth Program, and the Dislocated Workers Program.

Employment Consultants charge their time according to the amount of time spent on clients in each of the WIA funding sources. The staff time distribution reports are completed on a biweekly basis and are signed by each individual as well as the appropriate supervisory personnel.

County funds may be included in the both cost pools.

The BERC/OWD offices use staff time distribution reports in allocating direct costs to the various funding sources. All the indirect costs, such as telephones and supplies, are distributed based on percentage of enrolled participants.

Cost Allocation Plans for One-Stop Centers

WIA Title I staff is located at the Columbia Workforce Center One-Stop offices and the Business and Employment Resource Center. Co-locating staff provides for coordinated and consolidated services to customers. Basic parameters for the cost allocation plan have been developed.

Audits - Include the following standard statement:

All governmental and non-profit organizations must follow the audit requirements of OMB Circular A-133. An annual financial and compliance audit will be conducted and submitted to the Department of Labor, Licensing, and Regulation, Office of Employment Training within thirty (30) days after the completion of the audit report, but no later than nine (9) months after the end of the audit period. Furthermore, the LWIB or fiscal agent insures that all required subrecipient audits and all subrecipient audit resolution procedures are completed.

All governmental and non-profit organizations must follow the audit requirements of OMB Circular A-133. An annual financial and compliance audit will be conducted and submitted to the Department of Labor, Licensing, and Regulation, Division of Workforce Development within thirty (30) days after the completion of the audit report, but no later than nine (9) months after the end of the audit period. Furthermore, the LWIB or fiscal agent insures that all required sub-recipient audits and all sub-recipient audit resolution procedures are completed.

Mid-Maryland WIA offices assume responsibility for the collection of established debt if WIA funds have been misspent or there is a determination of disallowed costs.

If the contract is still in force, payments to the provider will be reduced according to the debt. If the contract has expired, efforts for collection will be made. If there is no closure, the WIA offices will forward the situation to the respective offices of law for collection proceedings.

G. Local Workforce Investment Board (LWIB) Chief Local Elected Official (CLEO) Working Agreements

Include as an attachment, the agreement between the LWIB and the CLEO that clearly delineates each partner's roles and responsibilities. The agreement should address the issues as outlined in WIFI No. 8-99.

1. Any action relating to the joint responsibilities of the County CLEO's and the WIB will be taken only with the concurrence of all the parties involved. The Counties or the WIB without the concurrence of the other bodies may unilaterally take no joint responsibility.

2. The local Title I staff in both Counties, acting as representatives of the LEO's, worked directly with the WIB in establishing the policies and procedures and in the development of the Plans.

3. The One Stop Operator was selected by an agreement between the LWIB and a consortium of more than three partner organizations and with consent of County executive level representatives of the CLEO's.

4. The Youth Council recommends eligible providers of Youth activities to the WIB. Title I staff use the local procurement system in each county to incorporate the WIB's recommendation for inclusion of service providers in a competitive process, if necessary.

5. The identification of eligible training providers can be recommended by the WIB for processing under the established procedures for inclusion on the local training provider list. The Maryland Higher Education Commission (MHEC) training provider list is also used as a source for training. Title I staff use the local procurement system in each county to incorporate the WIB's recommendation.

6. Intensive services will primarily be provided through the partnership of state staff, WIA Title I staff, and the Community Colleges. Contracts will be developed through the respective county procurement procedures for the provision of Intensive Services, as necessary.

7. The LWIB does not have its own operating budget. Day-to-day operational duties are performed by the Title I staff under the Board's direction and in conjunction with County supervision. Title I staff provide administrative support to the WIB. The budgets, which support staff activity, are developed within the Title I County structure and are controlled by the local government system.

8. The Workforce Board in conjunction with the Youth Council and with the concurrence of the local elected officials provides oversight for local youth activities. Title I staff who interface directly with the Youth Council and WIB, provide direct services to youth as well as the range of employment and training activities to adults and dislocated workers. Title I staff are an integral part of the One-Stop system. The Operator (Business & Employment Resource Center) and Howard County Office of Workforce Development are responsible for One-Stop partner oversight and monitoring the provision of services among the partners.

9. Mid-Maryland LWIB has adopted the State and Governor's negotiated benchmarks as the local performance expectations based upon the historical performance of the Title I staff.

10. The membership of the Youth Council, as a subgroup of the WIB, has been developed according to Regulation 661.335.

11. The scope of the relationship between the local WIB and the County Executive in Howard and the Commissioners in Carroll has been addressed in "Local Area Governance" of the general narrative section of the Plan. In summary the local Workforce Board works through Title I staff who are County personnel and who report

to respective county authorities. Additionally, any WIB member may request a direct appointment with the CLEOs.

H. Responsibilities of the One-Stop Service Delivery System

Describe the process to be used by the LWIB to meet its responsibilities related to One-Stop operations as outlined in WIFI No. 7-99 - Responsibilities of the Local Workforce Investment Boards for the One Stop Service Delivery System, including:

Describe the process to be used by the LWIB to select One-Stop operator(s) and the selection method to be utilized;

The Mid-Maryland WIB worked through its committees, the Youth Council, state and local governments, and partners to meet its responsibilities related to one-stop operations.

1. The Board voted to use the option selecting one-stop operators as described in Section 121(d) of the Act allowing for an agreement between three or more one-stop partners and the local board, and in agreement with the chief local elected officials.

Describe the process to be used by the LWIB to define the role of the One-Stop operator;

The role was defined by the WIB's committees in accordance with WIFI 7-99, of the One-stop operator and recommendations submitted to the full board. Priority responsibilities of the Operator target accountability, flexibility and effectiveness of service delivery, and precipitating change within the economic development arena as it relates to workforce development. The One-Stop Operator will ensure that staff and partner agencies receive instruction and updates regarding changes to the One-Stop operations and will consistently strive to improve service to its customer base.

Describe the process to be used by the LWIB to determine the number and type of One-Stop Centers in the local system;

The local board elected to designate the former CareerNet sites as Mid-Maryland One-Stop Centers. The centers have been effective in servicing the populations based on local demand. This past year we have partnered in the Laurel Regional Workforce Center.

Describe the process to be used by the LWIB to define the minimum requirements for each Center;

At a minimum workforce centers are expected to meet WIA/WP performance standards. Customers are greeted immediately at the reception desk, upon entering the One-stop. After signing in manually, the customers are triaged by reception personnel to the appropriate area/staff that can provide the best assistance. Customers are given the opportunity to participate in the one-stop orientation overview. The Resource area is always manned with at least one individual that can provide assistance or direction to the customer. Every staff member is capable of working the reception area and the Resource areas, and can provide Core services to customers. Staff members can also respond to inquiries from local businesses pertaining to services offered. There are dedicated personnel to work with the business community that can provide specific targeted business services, but all staff is competent to respond to basic inquiries. The Centers provide universal access to any individual wishing to use the resources and receive core services. All staff is familiar with the services that partner organizations provide and the myriad of other resources available in the community. Staff can make either formal or informal referrals to the agencies based on the customer needs.

The one-stop workforce centers are to be operated and managed in a professional customer friendly manner keeping in mind standard safety, neatness, and cleanliness measures. All personnel are expected to follow the personnel rules and regulations stipulated by their respective employers working with partners to enhance the service experience of the customers.

Describe the process to be used by the LWIB to setting performance standards including a customer satisfaction index;

The Mid-Maryland LWIB uses the State and Governor's negotiated benchmarks as the local performance expectations. Beyond the formal performance standards established in conjunction with the state, which the board may want to tweak, the board expects timely, professional, and courteous service to the universal population accessing the workforce centers. Customer feedback is requested in survey form and informally, and timely response is provided to any required follow-up. All personnel are evaluated through their respective employer systems, for skill sets and practice inclusive of job knowledge and "soft skill" competencies. Reception area personnel receive on-going training in the expectations of working with the public and are particularly conscious of anyone waiting in the reception area. Feedback is received informally on-site by customers reporting problems in "real time" specifically with computer equipment. Satisfaction surveys are routinely requested at all Overview or job specific workshops. An internal mechanism is used to follow-up on job orders. Close follow-up with registered customers frequently results in the use of supplemental data. Mid-Maryland uses available reports to achieve more timely information on outcomes.

> Describe the process to be used by the LWIB to review and evaluate performance of the One-Stop system and One-Stop operator(s); and

In reviewing and evaluating performance of the one-stop system and operators, the Board utilizes direct customer feedback, State Performance reports, local reports and reports from the MWE/VOS.   Essentially the Board is interested in whether customers received jobs, whether they retained the job, and whether the job was an improvement over their former one. Board members also visit the workforce centers to observe and informally ask customers about their experience. The WIB is interested in the types and costs of training.

The level of customer satisfaction within the centers is examined from the time an individual enters the One-Stop. This is accomplished through customer satisfaction surveys and informal feedback. One-stop customers are requested to complete customer satisfaction surveys for participants using the Resource Centers, attending One-stop Overview sessions, EI workshops, Federal job process workshops and other job acquisition enhancement workshops and businesses using Center resources. The surveys are reviewed and if there is an area that needs improvement, a strategy is implemented to improve that service. The staff and administration at the One-Stop Centers value their reputation for providing quality customer service. To that end, the One-stops work on continual improvement for customers' satisfaction.

> 3 Describe the process to be used by the LWIB to negotiate Memorandums of Understanding (MOUs) with One-Stop partners relative to operation of the One-Stop delivery system in the local area.

Board members with proven negotiation and/or business skills, may assist the "MOU Team", comprised of the WIA Director, center managers, and the labor exchange administrator, in meeting with partners to negotiate terms and conditions in accordance with cost allocation regulations for the Memoranda of Understanding (MOU's) related to operation of the One-Stop delivery system in Mid-Maryland.

I. Continuous Improvement

> Provide a description of the process to be used to ensure the continuous improvement of eligible providers of services and that such providers meet the employment needs of local employers and participants.

Consumers have access to The Maryland Workforce Exchange System to assist them in making quality choices with regard to a service provider. The system includes: performance of training providers in the local area; overall performance for specific customer groups, performance of

specific provider sites; current information on employment and wage trends and projections; and duration of training programs.

In order to ensure continuous improvement of eligible providers, the LWIB will:

- Use internal mechanisms for follow-up on referrals;

- Address customer complaints;

- Identify areas of concern that need to be remedied;

- Encourage closer informal feedback from customers to enhance the monitoring process; Demand prompt and quality service for customers;

- Promote a safe and professional environment;

- Provide quality-teaching tools to achieve desired outcomes.

Many of the eligible providers of services used in Mid-Maryland also have contacts in the business community and obtain the majority of their income from the business community. The community colleges and 4-year schools also have staff dedicated to working with business and also have contacts in the local area. This allows the providers to track what skills are currently being required in a given industry. In addition to the employer contacts, many providers may be connected to industry leaders. Through communication with the businesses we are able to obtain feedback on the quality of the training, the providers themselves as well as industry trends. The training providers are eager to work with us, therefore, are very forthcoming in providing information relevant to the latest local industry trends.

The majority of referrals for a particular training/or training provider are obtained through one of the following methods: Either the provider or a customer requests the provider solicit the LWIA for nomination to the Maryland State List of Occupational Training Providers or a customer requests a particular type of training because they can prove there is a demand for it; or the provider is offering a unique program and enrolling no more than two WIA students per program, per year in accordance with WIFI 5-00. In the former case, the provider is given the appropriate forms to complete and send to MHEC. If MHEC approves the training after the provider submits the appropriate documentation then the provider will usually contact the LWIA for nomination to the state list. A representative from Mid-Maryland will review and research the training program. If there is no clear justification to omit the program from the list

then we approve the nomination. The LWIA will send the provider a local Non-Financial Agreement to complete if there appears to be a local demand for the training. Often times when there is a request from a participant for approval for a specific training it is because a perspective employer will hire the candidate based on the need for that training or it is for a very specific type of training in a particular industry. This again allows the LWIA to become more familiar with what trends may be up and coming in the business community that may not be reflected in current LMI data and provide another level of service to our customers.

Staff in Mid-Maryland develops a strong rapport with their participant customers once they are at the Intensive or Training level of service and before "hard" dollars are spent on their training. Feedback is encouraged throughout the process as to the quality of training and service. Often times, customers are not comfortable putting their complaints in writing against a training provider but will communicate their concerns to staff. When this occurs, staff will research the issue, contact the provider and address the issue with the provider. If multiple complaints are brought against a provider, even in an informal manner, the staff may request an on-site monitoring visit and if necessary cease to use that provider.

In accordance with WIA regulations, customer choice is paramount in the selection of eligible providers at both the Intensive and Training levels of service. If there is not a class available within a reasonable time frame from one provider the staff in partnership with the participant or business customer will continue to research availability of courses. Every attempt is made to find one that is held within a satisfactory timeframe.

The Mid-Maryland area updates its Non-Financial agreements/Pre-Awards Certification with training providers every two years. This gives the providers an opportunity to update their information with the LWIA and for the LWIA to identify changes to the providers system. Providers are required to complete a Non-Financial Agreement with the WIA.

The MWE system, on-line research and discussion with One Stop staff are methods customers use to research and obtain data on eligible providers and the local labor market. These Internet based systems allow the customers to make informed decisions regarding the local market. However, another large factor in the consumer report system is the relationship the customer has with the staff at the One Stop centers. Often times the staff has insight into what is going on in the community, which is information that cannot be found in a database. Staff has networking contacts that enhance the knowledge they can share with the customers. Additionally, staff often has knowledge of the local labor market that the business community does not know how to access on their own. The sharing of this knowledge and information

strengthens the relationship with the business community and adds another level of customer service that can be provided.

The staff in Mid-Maryland strives to continuously update/upgrade their knowledge. As funding permits, staff will attend formal training sessions or conferences to achieve continuous improvement and consistently improve service to customers. Staff also engages in independent learning opportunities in order to enhance their knowledge and skill sets.

The Mid-Maryland LWIA plans to continue to strive for continuous improvements in services provided to all of their customers. We plan to continue to develop and enhance relationships with the local business community, job seeker participants and training providers as well as use the tools and resources available to us to improve customer satisfaction service.

ADDITIONAL INFORMATION REQUIRED

A. Operating Systems and Policies Supporting the State's Strategies

What are the local area policies utilized to support the integration of coordinated WIA Wagner-Peyser services?

Coordinated service delivery is paramount in Mid-Maryland. We have joint formal policies regarding workshop cancellations, business service delivery and front desk processes. More important to the operations of the centers, than the written policies, is the spirit of cooperation amongst the staff. Staff works together to provide the best service possible to internal and external customers. For example, WIA and WP staff will jointly meet with a job seeker to conduct mock interviews or refer individuals to an employment opportunity if one person has a relationship with that business. Staff is very comfortable talking together to determine how to best deliver services. Orientations are handled jointly and WIA staff presents information about WIA services in the E.I workshop. Joint staff meetings are held to convey information to the staff that work under the various funding streams. In summary, the policy of the office is to communicate with each other and not to put up artificial boundaries.

Please describe in detail one stop service delivery design for jobseekers?

Please describe in detail one stop service delivery design for Employers? Please discuss industry priorities, services delivered, and how you connect these services to job seekers in the system?

There are Business service teams comprised of WIA, WP staff, veterans staff and DORS. Some staff handle all business services and other staff are attached to specific grants, i.e. BRAC, Cyber and WISH (DSS) that specialize in a particular service, i.e. OJT or rapid response. Staff will team to visit businesses depending on the need of the business and specialty area of the staff. Staff will assist employers with recruitment activities including industry-specific recruitment events, MWE registration in, participant searches and job fairs.

Local businesses are canvassed by business services representatives to determine the priority needs of each individual business. Many positions in Howard County are professional services and/or technical positions. We endeavor to train individuals in response to local labor market demands. We have used OJT as an avenue to connect job seeker in the system with businesses. Companies are made aware of how to search in MWE for resumes. The business service representatives will bring information on employment opportunities and LMI to the workforce consultants in the office who work directly with the job seekers.

> How will the LWIA ensure an integrated service delivery model across programs and services delivered by the One-Stop Career Centers? Provide specific examples. Please include examples of innovative best practices, coordination between partners in the One-Stops, and blending and braiding for funding streams.

Center meetings are held with all partners periodically where we address center concerns, participate in trainings, and it is also a forum for open discussion. Together we brainstorm and share best practices and/or evaluate service delivery. Staff does not wait for meetings to address commons issues. They will meet, communicate their concerns and come to a joint resolution. Managers in the Center meet regularly to discuss any operational matters.

In Mid-Maryland we access funding outside of WIA. Staff meetings are held with administrative and program staff. Each person provides an update on their specific grant activities and special projects. In addition, the Direct Services supervisor holds weekly meetings with direct services staff to discus job seeker and business-specific issues. We find this provides direct services staff an opportunity to interact and draw on each other's knowledge. Through these meetings it makes it easier to work together to braid funding streams to best serve the customer.

We participate in the Pathways to Cyber Security grant which is a multi-jurisdictional grant. This grant has specific training associated with it and specific training vendors. Some dislocated workers we serve need training outside of the Cyber grant to enhance their opportunities for employment. In several instances, we have braided funding streams with Cyber and WD funds. We may have a customer in a CISSP training in Cyber but he may need Project Management as well. Through braided funding we can provide both trainings which enhances marketability and opportunities for a higher salary.

A best practice amongst the One-Stop partners is on-going communication and constant sharing of information. We also meet with businesses jointly and many of us serve on community boards and councils together. This makes it very easy to provide services collaboratively and be knowledgeable of local services and opportunities that will benefit the local economy.

> How will Local Areas provide WIA rapid response activities to dislocated workers?

The local WIA provides rapid response activities to dislocated workers by conducting information sessions at the location that is closing or reducing staff. We team with DLLR staff either locally or at the state level to provide comprehensive information including information on Center services, job leads, and unemployment insurance. The dislocated workers are encouraged to access the full array of services available through WIA/WP and visit the one-stop. They are also provided information about how to access MWE and other job search tools electronically.

> Other than MWE what other methods are used for data collection and reporting One-Stop programs and activities (e.g., surveys, customer feedback, suggestions box, etc.)? What other data is collected and how?

We have instituted local reports that include information on local UI rates, types of training most in demand and customers using the One Stop to name a few. We speak with our business and job seeker customers to evaluate their satisfaction and surveys are used in workshops.

B. Services to State Target Populations

> What employment, re-employment, and training needs are provided to unemployment compensation claimants, the long-term unemployed, the under-employed, and dislocated workers (including trade-impacted dislocated workers and displaced homemakers)?

The full array of WIA/WP and partner services in the One Stop is made available to all job seekers. Services are provided specific to the population and the individual job seeker's needs. It is the philosophy in Mid-Maryland that we provide as much of an individualized re-employment strategy as possible. Professionals may be referred to POAC workshops and affinity groups or we may hold special sessions for trade-impacted workers.   We adhere to the requirements of the EUCREA program. State merit staff is currently managing the EUCREA program to provide services to the long-term unemployed. We provide weekly Early Intervention workshops for UI claimants that are profiled and called in to the Center.   We always attempt to provide comprehensive service to our customers, and access or referrals to partner agencies.   We strive to empower our customers with the skills and knowledge to conduct their job search with staff assistance or independently.

> What employment, re-employment, and training needs are provided to low-income individuals (including recipients of public assistance)?

Please see immediately above.

We partner with our local DSS office to provide work experience and/or employment placement to low income individuals. We enroll some of these individuals into WA to access funding to provide occupational skills training thereby increasing current and future employment opportunities.

In the Center we work with income-eligible employed individuals to assist them with career pathing and increasing their earning potential to get to a living wage.

What employment, re-employment, and training needs are provided to migrant and seasonal farmworkers?

If a migrant seasonal farm worker is identified they are contacted and told about the services available and provided information on how to access them.

What employment, re-employment, and training needs are provided to veterans?

Priority of service is given to veterans in all programs available in WIA/WP. There is a LVER and DVOP that service each center. Veterans with barriers may be case managed by veteran staff and/or WIA staff jointly. Veterans are informed of all programs specific to them that may enhance their opportunities for civilian employment. Veterans are targeted to attend the federal employment workshops and informed of preferences in federal employment.

What employment, re-employment, and training needs are provided to individuals with limited English proficiency?

Individuals with limited English proficiency are encouraged to attend ESL classes to remove the language barrier. Staff will attempt to identify positions where the language may not be a barrier. Some staff in the One-stop speaks a second language. They make themselves available to assist customers with limited English and help staff to communicate with customers.

What employment, re-employment, and training needs are provided to homeless individuals?

The centers partner with the local shelters to determine the most effective method of providing service. Veteran's representatives provide services at the local shelter. Individuals are invited to use the workforce centers and in the past a number of homeless individuals have accessed

core, intensive and training services. We are in the beginning stages of developing a plan with c community partners to assist the chronically unemployed. We are examining the steps required to bring an individual to a "job-ready" point.   We try to understand the customers' needs and work with them.

Ex-offenders are afforded the same opportunities available to adults with some additional services provided as needed. Staff has received specialized training in providing services to ex-offenders and one is certified as an Offender Workforce Development Specialist I. When an individual discloses a criminal background they are provided information on the Maryland Federal Bonding Program. Also, an agreement between the Carroll County one-stop and the Carroll County Detention Center allows inmates eligible for work release or release from prison to come to BERC to prepare for employment and receive training if needed. Staff from the Columbia Workforce Center provides workshops at the Detention Center for inmates close to release.

What employment, re-employment, and training needs are provided to older workers?

Older workers receive the same services as adults. Low income older workers who may qualify for the Senior Employment Services program are referred to Family and Children's Services Program.

What employment, re-employment, and training needs are provided to individuals training for nontraditional employment?

Mid-Maryland encourages all individuals to pursue careers suited to their interests, skills and abilities. Employers are encouraged to consider nontraditional workers when searching for job candidates.

What employment, re-employment, and training needs are provided to individuals with multiple challenges to employment?

All individuals have access to services available at the one-stops. The initial customer assessment form or initial interview offers the customer the chance to disclose multiple challenges they may be facing and staff make the appropriate referral(s). It is not uncommon for co-case management between several programs in order to provide customers with the

best services possible. In Carroll County a committee, titled the Circle of Caring, is comprised of over 30 different service agencies. This committee meets monthly to discuss referrals, specific trends and issues affecting our customers and work together ensuring a customer that accesses services through one program is made aware of the services available through other programs. In Howard County, the WIA Director is on the local Board to promote Self Sufficiency with other service providers and businesses.

What employment, re-employment, and training needs are provided to adults with disabilities?

Mid-Maryland plans to continue to share job opportunities with DORS. During a recent job fair held at BERC, several partner agencies who serve those with disabilities encouraged their customers to attend. Many did and we hope this exposure educated employers of the many skills and talents these job seekers have and not focus on their disability. We plan to continue to educate employers on the positive outcomes of hiring an individual with a disability. Carroll County also recently resurrected the Job Placement Network, a network of partner agencies working towards finding employment for their customers, including those who serve individuals with disabilities. BERC is also a member of the Carroll County Transition Council comprised of DORS, the Abilities Network, Target Community & Educational Services Inc., Goodwill, and Carroll Community College. Transcen Career and Workforce Development. The Arc, Mosaic Community Services, STEP and Carroll County Public Schools. This team evolved from the Maryland Seamless Transition Collaborative that focused on helping students with disabilities successfully transition from school to the world of work.

Howard County staff participates on the Federal Executive Board for Disability Awareness and Howard County Committee on Disability Issues. The committee is comprised of most Howard County private and public organizations devoted to serving people with disabilities. The Howard County office is co-located with DORS. Both organizations are committed to maintaining and strengthening the strong partnership they have developed to provide comprehensive employment services for job seekers with disabilities. Job seekers with disabilities are enrolled in either one or both program as needed. The staff work cooperatively to develop employment plans and employment opportunities for shared customers. The Howard County Office of Workforce Development of the Mid-Maryland WIA spearheaded the development of a partnership between local government, education and disability services. The focus of the partnership is to provide career exploration opportunities for high school junior and seniors with disabilities. The program celebrated its fifth anniversary in April of this year. Over 30 youth participated in career exploration activities within local government and private sector businesses. Some of the participants were offered the opportunity for summer employment. OWD continues to be devoted to enhancing employment opportunities for all job seekers.

What types of services are currently provided to eligible youth with disabilities and youth with significant barriers?

Core, intensive and training services are available to youth with disabilities and youth with significant barriers. Mid-Maryland one-stops work collaboratively with partner agencies to ensure this population receives comprehensive services from available providers to enable them to be as successful as possible. In both counties the youth program coordinator meets regularly with juvenile court personnel, probation officers, school counselors, alternative school counselors and numerous community organizations. Both counties have seen a significant increase of homeless youth both in school and out-of-school. Most also lack a driver's license or mode of transportation exacerbating their problems. We have adopted an "it takes a village" approach to work with these youth to help them with their basic needs while focusing on developing a long term plan of employment. We have established a partnership with Central Maryland Regional Transit to assure that the youth of Howard County will have transportation and be able to attend their classes to obtain an education. A strong relationship exists with the Department of Juvenile Services and the Howard County Health Department, Substance Abuse and Addiction Services to assist youth dealing with issues of dependency from alcohol and drugs. BERC actively participates in the Carroll County Drug Treatment Court. Individuals, some of whom are youth, with substance abuse convictions can participate in a minimum of 13 months of intensive treatment and services from partner agencies. Those without jobs are referred to BERC for career counseling, job training if necessary, federal bonding and mentoring. This model has become nationally recognized. Recently, Howard County Office of Workforce Development has partnered with other government agencies to assist the youth with obtaining work experience through a paid 6 month internship/subsidized employment program. The youth work as government contingent employees to gain knowledge in soft and hard skills.

What is the long-term strategy to improve services and employment outcomes of individuals with disabilities? Examples - plans for the promotion and development of employment opportunities, job counseling, and placement for individuals with disabilities.

Mid-Maryland plans to continue to share job opportunities with DORS. In the CWC we share leads, resources and connection with our DORS partners. During a recent job fair held at BERC several partner agencies who serve those with disabilities encouraged their customers to attend. Many did and we hope this exposure educated employers of the many skills and talents these job seekers have and not focus on their disability. We plan to continue to educate employers on the positive outcomes of hiring an individual with a disability. Carroll County also recently resurrected the Job Placement Network, a network of partner agencies working

towards finding employment for their customers, including those who serve individuals with disabilities. BERC is also a member of the Carroll County Transition Council comprised of DORS, the Abilities Network, Target Community & Educational Services Inc., Goodwill, and Carroll Community College. Transcen Career and Workforce Development. The Arc, Mosaic Community Services, STEP and Carroll County Public Schools. This team evolved from the Maryland Seamless Transition Collaborative that focused on helping students with disabilities successfully transition from school to the world of work.

> How will comprehensive services for eligible youth, particularly youth with significant barriers to employment be delivered?

Services will be delivered through a team and partner approach. It is critical that all agencies who serve youth with significant barriers to employment are knowledgeable of each other's services and make appropriate referrals. Through programs such as the Carroll County Transition Council, Drug Treatment Court, and the youth counselors' regular meetings with other service providers, youth can receive the needed services to help remove barriers and reach their full potential. In Howard County, the case manager meets on regular basis with Howard County School System Transitional Teachers and Guidance Counselors, DORS, Department of Juvenile Services, and Job Corp just to name a few, and work collectively with the youth to assure that the youth becomes a self-sufficient and a productive adult.

Please see section on Youth (Page 27)

C. Wagner-Peyser Agricultural Outreach (If Applicable)

> Each applicable workforce agency shall operate an outreach program in order to locate and to contact migrant and seasonal farmworkers (MSFWs) who are not being reached by the normal intake activities conducted by the local offices. To this end, each agency must include in its Operational Plan an annual agricultural outreach plan, setting forth numerical goals, policies, and objectives. Regulations at 20 CFR 653.107 require that the outreach plan include the following elements:
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> - Assessment of need
> - Proposed outreach activities
> - Services provided to agricultural employers and MSFWs through the One-Stop delivery system
> - Numerical goals
> - Data analysis

N/A